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BY 57713W Date 5/11/78

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SOC 10 AFG
XK AID (US) 15-9 AFG

TELEGRAM

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PAGE 01 KABUL 05348 01 OF 02 150606Z

12
ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 NEA-05 EUR-06 E-05 IGA-02 INR-06 CIAE-00

DODE-00 L-03 IO-09 RSR-01 097 W

116652

R 141200Z SEP 72
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0276
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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JOINT EMBASSY/USAID MESSAGE

SUBJECT: CONTINUING EMERGENCY CONDITIONS IN WESTERN MOUNTAINS

SUMMARY: DESPITE HOPES AND ANTICIPATIONS TO CONTRARY BROUGHT ABOUT BY BUMPER CROPS IN MOST OF AFGHANISTAN THIS SUMMER, SEVERE FAMINE CONDITIONS REMAIN IN CONTROL HIGHLAND AREAS OF COUNTRY. PRESENT PRESENT RGA RESOURCES MAY BE WHOLLY INADEQUATE TO RESPOND IMPENDING CRISIS INVOLVING ISOLATED AREAS WHERE PERHAPS 200,000 FACE STARVATION WHEN WINTER MAKES REGIONS INACCESSIBLE.

RGA NOW GEARING UP FOR MAJOR EMERGENCY RELIEF EFFORT. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE MAY BE REQUESTED BY RGA. MISSION DESIROUS WASHINGTON ASSISTANCE NOW TO DETERMINE FEASIBILITY SUBSTANTIVE SUPPORT, INCLUDING POSSIBLE UTILIZATION C-130 TRANSPORTS FOR WHEAT AIRLIFT SEVERAL WEEKS THIS FALL.

ACTION REQUESTED: RESPONSE QUESTIONS PARA 8 RE TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY UTILIZING C-130S AND PRELIMINARY REACTION TO PROSPECT EMERGENCY PROGRAM INVOLVING COMMITMENT OF CONTINGENCY FUND AND

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DECLASSIFIED
PA/HO, Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
June 9, 2005

- **INQ 969015**

By **ST/VS** Date **5/11/78**



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PAGE 02 KABUL 05348 01 OF 02 150606Z

TITLE II AID.

1. REPORTS FROM PCVS IN AREA, PRIVATE MEDICAL AND RELIEF PERSONNEL AND OCCASIONAL TRAVELLERS INDICATE THAT ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL STARVATION CONDITIONS CONTINUE IN ISOLATED AREAS OF MOUNTAINOUS CENTRAL AND WESTERN REGIONS OF AFGHANISTAN. AREAS INVOLVED COVER AT LEAST DOZEN DISTRICTS THROUGHOUT GHOR, EASTERN BADGHIS, SOUTHERN FARYAB AND NORTHERN ORUZGAN. RGA DATA INDICATE THAT NORMAL POPULATION OF THESE AREAS IS OR WAS ABOUT 650,000 AND CURRENT REPORTS LEAD US TO BELIEVE THAT AT LEAST ONE-THIRD OF THAT NUMBER ARE DESTITUTE AND WITHOUT FOOD FOR THIS WINTER. THESE CONDITIONS RESULT FROM SEVERE DROUGHT OF PREVIOUS TWO YEARS AND LAST YEAR'S EXTREMELY HARD WINTER WHICH RESULTED IN DEATH OF NEARLY ALL SHEEP IN AREA AND CONSUMPTION BY LOCAL POPULATION OF VIRTUALLY ALL THEIR SEED IN ORDER SURVIVE. THUS THIS SUMMER'S CROPS IN THESE ISOLATED VALLEYS ARE EXTREMELY SMALL DESPITE EXCELLENT WATER CONDITIONS AND POPULATION HAS NO ANIMAL PRODUCTS WHICH NORMALLY CONSTITUTE MAJOR ELEMENT IN THEIR DIET.

2. WHILE THESE CONDITIONS HAVE NOT BEEN SYSTEMATICALLY REPORTED BY GOVERNORS AND SUB-GOVERNORS IN AREA, THEY HAVE BEEN OBJECT OF PRIVATE RELIEF EFFORTS AND CONSIDERABLE RGA ATTENTION INCLUDING RELIEF EXPEDITIONS TO CHAKCHARAN AND SURROUNDING AREAS BY THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE TO DISTRIBUTE MEDICINE, CLOTHING AND SOME FOOD. SIGNIFICANT JOINT MEDICAL AND MCH PROGRAM CURRENTLY BEING MOUNTED BY UNICEF AND MPH, AND CURRENTLY PLANNED GOVERNMENT PROGRAM UNDER COMMITTEE TO BE CHAIRED BY STRONG EXECUTIVE AND SUPPORTED BY LTG KABIR SERAJ, CHIEF OF ARMY LOGISTICS, TO MOVE 5,000-7,000 TONS OF WHEAT INTO AREA, MAINLY TO CHAKCHARAN AND SHAHRAK IN GHOR WITH SMALL AMOUNTS TO SEVEN OTHER DISTRICT CENTERS WHICH HAVE ONLY 100-150 MT GOVERNMENT STORAGE. FFW ACTIVITY IN THESE AREAS HAS BEEN HAMPERED BY LACK OF WHEAT, LACK OF TRANSPORT AND POOR ADMINISTRATION THROUGH SUMMER AND AAS FAILED TO MEET NEEDS.

3. WE BELIEVE OUR INFORMATION ON EXTENT OF NEED IS OF RIGHT ORDER OF MAGNITUDE AND THAT PROPOSED RGA EFFORTS ARE RADICALLY INADEQUATE AND THOUSANDS PEOPLE IN THESE ISOLATED AREAS WILL DIE OF STARVATION THIS WINTER. SURVIVAL REQUIREMENT THROUGH NEXT SPRING OF 200,000 DESTITUTE PEOPLE WOULD BE ABOUT 30,000 TONS OF WHEAT AT ONE HALF KG/PERSON/DAY. THIS WOULD BE 6,000

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DECLASSIFIED
PA/HO, Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
June 9, 2005

8/11/82 969015

By 577150 Date 5/11/82



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PAGE 03 KABUL 05348 01 OF 02 150606Z

TRUCK LOADS TO BE DELIVERED DURING NEXT 2 AND ONE HALF TO THREE MONTHS PRIOR TO WINTER CLOSURE OF MOUNTAIN PASSES INTO DOZEN OR MORE ISOLATED DISTRICT CENTERS INVOLVING AVERAGE OF 6000 KM ROUND TRIP PER LOAD OVER TERRIBLE MOUNTAIN ROADS. PROBABLE TURN AROUND TIMES ARE SUCH THAT AT LEAST 1200 TRUCKS WORKING FULL TIME WOULD BE REQUIRED. IN ADDITION SEVERAL DISTRIBUTION CENTERS CANNOT BE REACHED BY TRUCK AND SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL ANIMAL TRANSPORT WOULD NEED TO BE ORGANIZED. SINCE THERE IS INSUFFICIENT PUBLIC STORAGE FOR QUANTITIES REQUIRED IN DISTRIBUTION CENTERS, DISTRIBUTION TO DESTITUTE FAMILIES FOR FAMILY STORAGE AND EVENTUAL CONSUMPTION AT HOME WOULD TAKE PLACE ON DELIVERY OF WHEAT AT DISTRIBUTION CENTERS. WE BELIEVE THAT, IF SUPPLIES MADE AVAILABLE IN ISOLATED COMMUNITIES ARE ADEQUATE TO THEIR NEED, ROUGHLY EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION COULD BE ORGANIZED THROUGH LOCAL COMMITTEES INCLUDING VILLIAGE HEADMEN AND MULLAHS. IF, AS WAS CASE LAST WINTER, GOVERNMENT SUPPLIES AVAILABLE ARE ONLY TAKEN IN FACE OF DESPERATE NEED, RUTHLESS EXPLOITATION OF SITUATION BY LOCAL WIELDERS OF POWER FOR THEIR PERSONAL ADVANTAGE WILL CONTINUE. FOR EXAMPLE, IN MORGHAB RIVER VALLEYS OF JAWAND WHERE MANY DIED OF STARVATION LAST WINTER, WHEAT WAS THEN BEING SOLD IN BAZAAR FOR 350 AFS/SEER WHILE MODEST AMOUNTS OF WHEAT REMAINED AVAILABLE IN NEARBY GOVERNMENT GODOWN WHICH SUB-GOVERNOR REFUSED TO SELL AT GOVERNMENT PRICE OF 52.5 AFS/SEER.

4. GENERAL SERAJ WHO HAS HEADED TEAM INVESTIGATING FAMINE BELIEVES OUR NUMBERS OF DESTITUTE PEOPLE STILL IN THE ^{COUNTRY?} ARE SUBSTANTIALLY TOO HIGH. ACTING PRIME MINISTER AND SARDAR ABDUL WALI GENERALLY MORE INCLINED AGREE WITH OUR ESTIMATE OF NEED AND WHEAT REQUIREMENTS. ALL AGREE THERE IS A MAJOR PROBLEM REQUIRING IMMEDIATE RGA ACTION AND THAT ONE ASPECT OF THAT ACTION MUST BE BETTER INFORMATION ON EXTENT OF NEED.

5. WHILE BOTH AFGHAN ARMY AND MPW HAVE LARGE NUMBERS OF TRUCKS WHICH ARE NOT FULLY UTILIZED, MANY OF THEM ARE NOT IN FACT CAPABLE OF OPERATION. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT MORE THAN 300 OR 400 TRUCKS COULD BE OBTAINED FROM THOSE SOURCES WITHOUT EXTREME DISRUPTION OF OTHER PROGRAMS. RGA GENERAL TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT HAS STANDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH SOME 1,600 PRIVATELY OWNED TRUCKS BUT ALSO HAS MAJOR, OTHER CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDING THIS FALL TRANSPORT INTO KABUL 14,000 TONS OF COAL AND THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY 40,000-50,000 TONS OF

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PA/HO, Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
June 9, 2005

~~SECRET~~ 969015

By ST/VSW Date 5/11/18



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PAGE 04 KABUL 05348 01 OF 02 150606Z

FERTILIZER PLUS SEED AND FOOD WHEAT. IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT MORE THAN 200 TRUCKS COULD BE OBTAINED THROUGH GENERAL TRANSPORT WITHOUT SERIOUSLY UNDERCUTTING THEIR ABILITY MEET OTHER PRIORITY DEMANDS. WHILE THERE ARE PERHAPS 8,000 OTHER TRUCKS SCATTERED THROUGHOUT COUNTRY IN PRIVATE HANDS, GOVERNMENT HAS NO COMMAND OVER THEM OTHER THAN COMMERCIAL HIRE. THEY ARE OCCUPIED WITH OTHER CHORES, ARE DIFFICULT TO PERSUADE TO UNDERTAKE TRIPS TO REMOTE MOUNTAIN AREAS OF CONCERN, AND IN FACE OF DEMAND SUCH AS HEREIN CONTEMPLATED WOULD BE EXORBITANTLY EXPENSIVE. ACCORDINGLY, WE AND RGA BELIEVE THAT ONLY HALF OF TRANSPORT NEEDED TO MEET OUR ESTIMATE OF PROBLEM WOULD BE FEASIBLE WITH AFGHAN TRUCKS, EVEN WITH EXPANDED PROGRAM AND RGA COMMITMENT DO ALL POSSIBLE TO PROVIDE SUCH TRUCKS.

6. RGA TARDINESS IN FACING THIS PROBLEM STEMS FROM SEVERAL CAUSES: FIRST, EXTRAORDINARILY POOR LEADERSHIP AND ANALYTICAL ABILITY AND APATHETIC ATTITUDE OF MOST PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS INCLUDING GOVERNORS MITIGATES AGAINST THEIR DETERMINING NATURE

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PAGE 01 KABUL 05349 02 OF 02 150506Z

15
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DODE-00 L-03 IO-09 /097 W

116357

R 141200Z SEP 72
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
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AND EXTENT OF CRISIS. IN CENTRAL HIGHLANDS AREA AFFECTED, PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE SO ACCUSTOMED TO DEPRIVATION AND DEATH WITHOUT HOPE OF OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE THAT THEY TEND ACCEPT CRISIS OR DENY THAT CRISIS EXISTS. SINCE JUNE NEWSMEN AND FOREIGNERS HAVE GENERALLY BEEN KEPT OUT OF THESE AREAS EXCEPT FOR MAJOR CENTERS. WHILE THERE ARE INDIVIDUAL HORROR STORIES, THERE IS NO GENERAL AFGHAN AWARENESS OF APPROACHING STARVATION AMONG SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF PEOPLE. SECOND, PRIMARILY DUE TO ABOVE LIMITATION, WAKIL AND OTHER RGA OFFICIALS ARE EXTREMELY RELUCTANT TO DECLARE EMERGENCY FOR CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF WHICH ADMINISTRATION CAN BE BLAMED AND WHEN THEY LACK CAPABILITY TO RESPOND FULLY AND EFFECTIVELY. THIRD, GOVERNMENT IS FACED WITH SEVERE FINANCIAL LIMITATIONS. HOWEVER, IN LATEST CONVERSATIONS WITH ACTING PRIME MINISTER AND ABDUL WALI (REPORTED SEPTELS), AMBASSADOR HAS BEEN ASSURED THAT RGA NOW MOUNTING SERIOUS, LARGE SCALE EMERGENCY PROGRAM.

7. SHOULD QUANTITIES OF WHEAT REQUIRED TO PREVENT STARVATION INDEED PROVE TO BE GREATER THAN CAN BE MOVED BY AN ALL OUT AFGHAN TRANSPORT EFFORT, THERE APPEAR TO BE TWO POSSIBLE WAYS OF EFFECTIVELY ASSISTING. ONE, WHICH WOULD BE LESS COSTLY

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E.O. 12958, as amended
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W/N 969015

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REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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PAGE 02 KABUL 05349 02 OF 02 150506Z

AND PROBABLY LESS SATISFACTORY, WOULD BE TO USE AID CONTINGENCY FUNDS TO HIRE TRUCKS IN IRAN AND PAKISTAN TO MEET REMAINING NEED. WE HAVE NOT YET EXPLORED THIS POSSIBILITY. ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE AIRLIFT OF WHEAT FROM KANDAHAR AND KABUL INTO BAMIYAN, CHAKCHARAN AND QALI-NAU. EIGHT C-130S MAKING TWO TRIPS A DAY COULD MOVE 1,920 MT A WEEK. THIS PLUS 650 TRUCKS COULD PROVIDE TRANSPORT THAT WOULD OTHERWISE REQUIRE 1,200 TRUCKS.

8. WE REQUEST WASHINGTON CONSIDER FEASIBILITY THIS LATTER POSSIBILITY. SO FAR OUR THINKING IS BASED ON FOLLOWING ASSUMPTIONS DERIVED FROM DISCUSSION WITH AIR ATTACHE. REQUEST YOU CONFIRM FOLLOWING OPERATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS AND ADVISE ON OTHER FACTORS NEEDED FOR LOGISTICAL PLANNING HERE:

A. UP TO 8 C-130S COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR SEVERAL WEEKS THIS FALL FOR EMERGENCY AIRLIFT ON BASIS OF REIMBURSEMENT FROM AID CONTINGENCY FUND. WE ARE NOT NOW REPEAT NOT NOW REQUESTING THIS .

B. C-130 CAN LIFT 20 MT OF WHEAT PLUS ROUND TRIP FUEL FROM KABUL, ELEVATION 5,871 FEET, LENGTH 9,184 FEET AND KANDAHAR ELEVATION 3,281 FEET, LENGTH 10,500 FEET.

C. C-130 CAN LAND SO LOADED ON AVAILABLE STRIPS AT CHAKCHARAN, ELEVATION 7,320 FEET, LENGTH 2,300 FEET (GRAVEL); QALI-NAU ELEVATION 2,998 FEET, LENGTH 2,968 FEET (GRAVEL); AND BAMIYAN ELEVATION 8,367 FEET, LENGTH 4,754 FEET (GRAVEL).

D. EXTENDED C-130 OPERATIONS FEASIBLE FROM KANDAHAR AND KABUL AIRPORTS WHICH HAVE ADEQUATE FUEL STORAGE AND CREW SUPPORT CAPACITY BUT NO C-130 MAINTENANCE FACILITIES.

E. TWO ROUND TRIPS A DAY FEASIBLE KANDAHAR-CHAKCHARAN, KANDAHAR-QALI-NAU, AND KABUL-BAMIYAN WITH COOLIE LOADING AND UNLOADING OF AIRCRAFT SUPPLEMENTED BY LIMITED TRUCK LIFT CAPACITY AT KABUL AND KANDAHAR ONLY.

9. ANY PROPOSAL FOR USE OF AIRLIFT WILL DEPEND ON RG IMPLEMENTATION TO MAJOR COLLATERAL EFFORT. THIS WOULD INCLUDE:

A. TIMELY SUPPLY OF NEEDED TONS OF WHEAT TO KANDAHAR AND KABUL AIRPORTS FROM EXISTING GOVERNMENT STOCKS OR FROM RGA-FINANCED

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E.O. 12958, as amended
June 9, 2005

- BNR 969015
By ST/150 Date 3/11/18



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PAGE 03 KABUL 05349 02 OF 02 150506Z

LOCAL PROCUREMENT. WE WOULD ANTICIPATE AND WOULD RECOMMEND FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION OF RGA REQUEST FOR REPLACEMENT OF ALL WHEAT USED IN THIS PROGRAM UNDER FUTURE ADDITIONAL TITLE II AGREEMENT.

B. AT LEAST 400 TRUCKS TO MOVE AIRLIFTED WHEAT FROM CHAKCHARAN, QALI-NAU AND BAMIAN TO OUTLYING NEEDY AREAS.

C. AT LEAST 250 ADDITIONAL TRUCKS WOULD BE NEEDED TO HAUL WHEAT FROM HERAT AND SHIBARGAN INTO ADDITIONAL NEEDY AREAS.

D. REQUISITE LABOR ORGANIZED, PAID AND SUPERVISED AT AIRFIELDS TO LOAD AND UNLOAD AIRCRAFT.

E. ASSIGNMENT OF PERHAPS 100 PROVINCIAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL PLUS 30 PCVS TO NEEDY DISTRICTS TO OVERSEE DISTRIBUTION. OVERALL OPERATION SHOULD BE UNDER DIRECTION OF FULLY EMPOWERED EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATOR WITH FULL FUNDING AND OPERATIONAL FLEXIBILITY. ESTIMATED COSTS EXCEED 100 MILLION AFS PLUS WHEAT PROCUREMENT.

10. FOLLOWING TABLE GIVES TARGET AREAS WITH STANDING GOVERNMENT ESTIMATES OF POPULATION AND USAID GUESS OF NUMBER OF NEEDY BASED ON SPOTTY REPORTS OF DEGREE OF POVERTY. TONNAGE REQUIREMENTS ARE DERIVATIVE AT 135 KG PER NEEDY PERSON TO MEET 9 MONTH REQUIREMENTS. THESE NUMBERS ARE EXTREMELY PROBLEMATIC AND SHOULD BE TAKEN AS ROUGH INDICATORS OF ORDER OF MAGNITUDE SUBJECT TO FURTHER INFORMATION FROM FIELD:

PROVINCE	DISTRICT	POPULATION	NEEDY	MT NEEDED
BADGHIS	JAWAND	59,000	50,000	6,750
FARYAB	KOHESTAN	20,000	15,000	2,025
	DARZAB		8,500	1,150
GHOR	CHAKCHARAN	64,000	32,000	4,320
	ABUL		(8,000)	(1,080)
	GHALMIN		(8,000)	(1,080)
	SHAHRAK	65,000	16,000	2,160
	SAGHAR	22,000	6,000	810
	PASABADND	28,000	7,000	945
	LAL SAR JANGUL	52,000	13,000	1,755
ORUZGAN	DAZKUNKI	113,000	34,000	4,600
	SHAHRASTAN	53,000	13,000	1,755

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PAGE 04 KABUL 05349 02 OF 02 150506Z

	AJARISATAN	42,000	13,000	1,755
HERAT	GULRAM	63,000	16,000	2,160
	CHATI-SHARIF	48,000	12,000	1,620
TOTAL		663,000	235,000	31,805

11. MISSION FULLY COGNIZANT RADICAL DIMENSIONS OF ACTION NEEDED AND ORGANIZATIONAL DIFFICULTIES ON RGA SIDE EVEN WITH AIRLIFT HELP. PRIMARY CONDITION PRECEDENT OF SUCH ASSISTANCE IS THAT RGA MUST ACKNOWLEDGE CRISIS PUBLICLY AND REQUEST OUR (AND OTHER DONOR) RESPONSE WITH DETAILED PLAN FOR ADEQUATE ACTION INCLUDING FIRM COMMITMENT THEIR INPUT AND INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION. GIVEN LIMITED RGA ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL ABILITY, THE NEED TO IMPORT AND POSITION LARGE QUANTITIES OF FUELS (DIESEL, TRUCK/AVIATION GAS), ORGANIZATION REQUIRED TO LOAD, UNLOAD LOCAL TRANSPORT AND DISTRIBUTION, ETC. SUGGEST "MIND BOGLING" IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, LATEST CONTACTS WITH SHAFIQ, WAKIL, ABDUL WALI AND OTHERS (SEPTELS) LEAD US BELIEVE RGA MOVING RAPIDLY AND AT HIGHEST LEVELS IN DIRECTION OF TRYING MAKE MAJOR TRY AND WILL ENLIST USG AND OTHER DONOR SUPPORT.

12. WHILE ANY SUCH EFFORT FRAUGHT WITH DANGER OF MISHAPS, GIVEN SHORT TIME BEFORE SNOWFALL AND LARGE NUMBERS OF PERSONS WHO MAY DIE THIS WINTER IF FOOD NOT PROVIDED, ON BALANCE WE ARE IN FAVOR OF STRONG USG SUPPORT IF RGA MAKES MAJOR CRASH EFFORT TO ALLEVIATE SUFFERING OF THESE PEOPLE. WE HAVE DEALT ONLY WITH BASIC FOOD (WHEAT) NEEDS SO FAR, BUT RGA LIKELY INCLUDE MEDICINE AND HIGH PROTEIN ITEMS FOR CHILDREN. WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON REACTION.

DECON FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER 13, 1975.

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E.O. 12958, as amended
June 9, 2005